

DD/A Registry

76-1490

OC-M-76-160

23 MAR 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director for Administration

FROM : [REDACTED]  
Acting Director of Communications

STATINTL

SUBJECT : Program Evaluation

REFERENCE : DD/A 75-3201 dated 8 July 1975

1. The reference tasked the Office of Communications with the development of a program evaluation methodology for its ongoing projects and the actual performance of an evaluation using the SKYLINK program. The ACT system was used in lieu of SKYLINK because it was felt that it was much too early in the SKYLINK program to reliably determine its eventual impact on OC operations. Accordingly, Attachment A contains the ACT Program Evaluation. The program evaluation criteria have been included in the Appendix to the report.

2. Also included in the reference was a request to perform an appraisal of the evaluation process, including its cost/benefit as a management tool. The results of this effort are contained in Attachment B.

SIGNED

STATINTL

2 Attachments:

- A. ACT Program Evaluation
- B. Evaluation Appraisal

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Attachment B to OC-M-76-160

23 MAR 1976

SUBJECT: ACT Program Evaluation Appraisal

1. A program evaluation methodology should provide management with feedback in many important areas. Not only should it evaluate project effectiveness, but also and, perhaps more importantly, it should identify problem areas in the overall program cycle that deserve management attention. Therefore, the cost/benefit of any program evaluation appears most predicated upon the number of problems that occurred, the amount of knowledge acquired about these problems, and the successful rectification of those procedures that caused the difficulties. The evaluation criteria, given in the Appendix to the report, were developed to examine a project from inception through implementation and, accordingly, review not only the impact and effectiveness of a system, but also the planning and procurement cycle.

2. Technical problems encountered during the contract are discussed in the report and can be used for reference by personnel involved in similar efforts in the future. The list of recommendations contained in the report are necessarily broad because it was felt that the problems experienced were not unique to the ACT program and, therefore, warrant further management attention.

3. The basic difficulty encountered during the evaluation was obtaining the appropriate information to allow comparison of Signal Center activities before and after the implementation of ACT. If this program evaluation methodology is to be continued, the intended system objectives of future efforts should be more fully qualified and quantified. This would not only expedite the evaluation, but would also provide management with specific information with which to approve or disapprove a program.

4. While approximately 450 manhours was spent on this initial evaluation, the basic purpose is valid and it can provide both management and employees useful information for future efforts. As mentioned previously, the benefit of any such evaluation is primarily a function of the difficulties encountered and the successful resolution of their causes.

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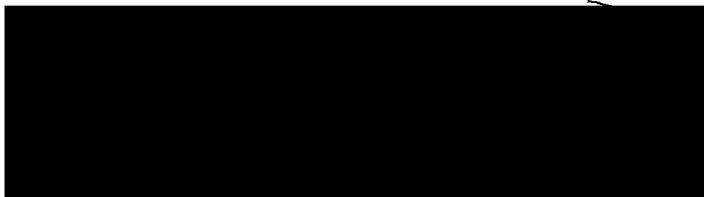
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8 April 1976

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SUBJECT: OC Program Evaluation - Automated Communications  
Terminal

1. OC has done a good job in their post mortem of the ACT System development and implementation. ACT is a multi-programmed computer system configured to automate the message processing operations of the Headquarters Signal Center. ACT was operational in March 1973, three years after the contract was signed and 18 months behind schedule.

2. At the outset, OC attempted to evaluate as best it could the proposals and capabilities of the bidding organizations while at the same time remaining attuned to the possible costs of the proposed program. If there was one weak area in their management of the project, it was in the selection process--and this they readily admit. In retrospect, OC suggests that before a bidder is selected, included for considerations should be such factors as long-range corporate objectives, prior experience in the field and overall capabilities. Commo has also listed a number of items which they believe to be important in the contractor selection process (see their report, pp. 31-32).

3. The achievement of the ACT project objectives is well documented including statistics to support the OC statement that ACT is saving resources (dollars, time and personnel). OC listed the following achievements against objectives for ACT:

a. eliminated backlog of message traffic by automating manual functions in WTF;

b. overtime needed to process backlogged message traffic was eliminated;

c. increased volumes of traffic have been handled without increases in personnel;

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SUBJECT: OC Program Evaluation - Automated Communications  
Terminal

d. in-house handling time for message processing was sped up; and

e. reduced personnel costs make up the bulk of the \$275K savings achieved by implementation of ACT.

4. OC concludes that ACT has significantly improved Signal Center operational capabilities and although many difficulties were encountered, the benefits outweigh the trials and tribulations experienced during the implementation period.



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